

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE GRADE OF LESSER ADEPT, 5 = 6



THE GRADE OF LESSER ADEPT corresponds to the sixth circle on the Tree of Life, named ThPARTh, *Tiphareth*, Beauty. To it corresponds the sentence in the *Pattern on the Trestleboard*: "In all things, great and small, I see the Beauty of the Divine Expression." In Qabalistic psychology, imagination is attributed to *Tiphareth*, and the work of the Lesser Adept has much to do with controlled mental imagery.

The sixth Sephirah is also termed "Intelligence of Mediating Influence." It is likewise known as BN, *Ben*, the Son, as MLK, *Melek*, the King, as ADM, *Adam*, Man (in the generic sense), and as AISH, *Ish*, man (the personal man). But the greatest secrets of this Sephirah have to do with what is termed in Hebrew ZOIR ANPIN, *Zauir Anpin*, the Lesser Countenance, or Microprosopus.

In the Qabalah *Ben*, the Son, is said to be the husband of the Bride, *Kallah* (KLH). This Bride is the Kingdom, or tenth Sephirah. *Ben*, the Son is called also the child of AIMA, *Aima*, the Mother, and this Mother is represented on the Tree of Life by Understanding, the third circle. The Son's Father (in Hebrew AB, *Ab*) is Wisdom, the second circle of the Tree. In Qabalistic number occultism, therefore, 6 is the Son of 2 and 3, and the Husband or Bridegroom of 10.

*Tiphareth* is the seat of the mediating influence of the incarnate Christos. Hence, the Qabalists tell us that the Lesser Countenance, or Microprosopus, is the reflection of the Greater Countenance, or Macroprosopus. That Greater Countenance is *Kether*, or Crown, or the number 1, wherein is seated the cosmic Self, named ICHIDH, *Yekhidah*, the Indivisible. *Yekhidah* is the universal I AM, but the Lesser Countenance is the Self seated, as the *Bhagavad-Gita* puts it, in the heart of man. Hence, we find that *Tiphareth* is also attributed to the heart.

The meaning ought to be evident to the thoughtful reader. *Tiphareth* is the central point on the Tree of Life, standing halfway between *Kether* and *Malkuth*. Thus, its very position suggests mediation, adaptation,

equilibration, and the like. It is the center of balance in the cosmic order represented by the Tree.

It is called King because it actually does exercise a royal authority. It has the names of generic man, *Adam*, and of personal man, *Ish*, because the essential reality of both of these is one and the same. It was by identifying himself completely with this one reality that Jesus was able to say, "I and the Father are One," and it was for the same reason that Jesus called himself the Son of Man. Strangely enough, the New Testament records this title, Son of Man exactly 37 times, and 37 is the number of IChIDH, *Yekhidah*, the Hebrew name for the cosmic I AM of which *Adam* and *Ish*, the two aspects of the Royal Son, are the reflection.

In ceremonial versions of Rosicrucian instruction, this Grade of Lesser Adept is the one in which the allegory of Brother C. R. is rehearsed and explained. In it one enters ceremonially into the Vault described in the *Fama*. In it the advancing aspirant is identified with Brother C. R. and also with the Egyptian Osiris, "slain and risen." Thus, there are points of correspondence between this Grade and the Third Degree in Craft Masonry, which has to do with the death and raising of Hiram Abiff.

You will better understand the meaning of this Grade if you bear in mind the truth that real beauty is always related to fitness and strength. Whatever is truly adapted to its uses is always beautiful in the eyes of those who perceive its fitness. Beauty is not necessarily prettiness. Often the untrained eye rejects what is profoundly admired by those who have had right instruction.

In Central America, some years ago, an aqueduct was built to carry water through miles of jungle. The engineer took an artist friend to see it, and the eye of the artist was ravished by the beautiful symmetry of the arches supporting the structure.

"What a pity," he exclaimed, "to waste such perfection in a place where nobody will see it! However did you come to choose such beautiful arches?"

"Beautiful, are they?" responded the engineer. "Well, we never thought of that. We used the type of arch that our calculations demonstrated to be the strongest and best adapted to this particular kind of load."

Compare a racing yacht with a dugout, a modern locomotive with the engines of 1860, modern setback buildings with early skyscrapers, an athlete's body with that of the average man. Beauty is a direct consequence of increased efficiency. "The more correct the measurement," said Albrecht Dürer, "the better the composition." And Eliphas Levi tells us, "The beautiful lives are the accurate ones, and the magnificences of Nature are an algebra of graces and splendors."

Here is no namby-pamby estheticism, such as Gilbert and Sullivan delighted to burlesque. The beauty that the Lesser Adept learns to see is rooted in strength and balance.

## THE TWENTY-SIXTH PATH

*The twenty-sixth path is called the Renewing or Renovating Intelligence, because by it the Holy God renews all that is begun afresh in the creation of the world.*

*Book of Formation*

This is the first of the three paths leading to the Grade of Lesser Adept. It begins in the Grade of Practicus and is assigned to Tarot Key 15, named *The Devil*.

The adjective *renewing* is MChVDSH, *mahkodesh*, from a Hebrew root meaning "to be fresh, new, young; to renew, to erect anew." The number of this adjective is 358, which is also the number of GShNH, *gashenah*, "shame"; IBA ShILH, *Iba Shiloh*, "tranquillity shall come"; MSHIch, *Messiah*; NChSh, *Nachash*, "the serpent of temptation" (also, with the same letters but differently pointed, "copper"); and ChShN, *khoshen*, "the breastplate of the High Priest."

Shame has more to do with the renewal of consciousness than may appear at first. It was with some understanding of this that evangelical churches put so much stress on "conviction of sin." When one is thoroughly disgusted with one's own state or with one's circumstances, it seems to be easier to make the required effort to begin afresh.

The other words in this series are also important. *Iba Shiloh* has been traditionally associated with the Hebrew Messianic expectation. In this connection it is interesting to note that the name of the serpent that initiated Eve into the mystery of good and evil is numerically the same as Messiah, and that the name of this serpent is also spelled with the same letters as those used to spell the Hebrew noun sometimes used for "copper," the metal of Venus.

Finally, the word ChShN, *khoshen*, the name of the High Priest's breastplate, brings in another mathematical element. For the breastplate was a perfect square, subdivided into twelve parts, so that each of its divisions was a rectangle of three by four units. In this arrangement is concealed a geometrical formula having to do with the series of numbers 0, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55. The number 358 is composed of the fourth, fifth, and sixth terms of this series. In what manner this is connected with the breastplate is too intricate for explanation here.

What is more important is that the series of words belonging to the number 358 includes *Nachash* (the serpent), which came to be personified during the Middle Ages as the ridiculous monster pictured by Key 15. The same number also represents the Messiah. There is no escape from the implication, which becomes the more emphatic when one remembers that the brazen serpent of Moses, lifted on a T-cross, was understood by the early Christians to be a foreshadowing of the crucifixion of Jesus.

This path is connected with the letter Ayin, and the name of this letter, besides signifying "the eye, as organ of sight," also means "the visible part of an object, the surface, the appearance." Thus, the word *Ayin* stands for the phenomenal as opposed to the noumenal, that which is given to sensation or impression as opposed to that which is subject to rational verification. The eye is therefore the natural symbol of those external shows that conceal Reality. It is the sign of man's finite experience of things as they seem, as opposed to the realities of the hidden essence veiled in form.

Through the function of the eye we become aware of the phantasmagoria of the phenomenal world, which Shakespeare called "this unsubstantial pageant." The untrained eye is the great deceiver. On this account the letter Ayin is attributed to the Tarot Key whose title means "The Slanderer."

Just as a slanderer's aim is to blacken the reputation of the person he lies about and thus to hinder him in the execution of his plans, so that which Key 15 personifies is what tells man falsehoods about his own nature and about his place in the scheme of things.

Nevertheless, Ageless Wisdom declares that this same power is what makes all things new. This brings us close to a profound occult doctrine. According to it, the world of appearances is not in itself a world of deception. The delusions arise from our own tendency to take things at their face value. Furthermore, the world of appearances excites attention. However much we may misunderstand it, it piques our interest. We wonder about it. We are made curious by what we see. Wherever we look there is something to challenge us, something to puzzle, some riddle to read, some problem to solve.

To the untrained eye and the undisciplined mind the marvels of the world strike terror. It is written that the fear of the One Reality is the beginning of wisdom. In every generation, however, there are a few persons whom wonder prods into investigating something that scares most of their contemporaries.

Thus, what men fear is what really instructs them and so leads finally to their liberation. Hence, it is written: "The Devil is God, as He is misunderstood by the wicked." (Here it may be noted that the number of the path we are studying is 26, the number of the Divine Name IHVH, *Jehovah*, and that the number of the corresponding Tarot Key is 15, the number of the Divine Name IH, *Yah*, the short form of *Jehovah*, used by Qabalists to designate Wisdom.)

The central figure of Key 15 symbolizes the ridiculous combination of false interpretations of nature that leads man to believe that all sorts of powers are arrayed against him in his progress toward the Light. It is a picture of what occult writers call "the Dweller on the Threshold."

For primitive man, everything unknown is an adversary. The savage lives surrounded by devils—demons in trees, stones, rivers, the clouds. Everything frightens him. Everything seems to thwart him.

As man progresses, he comes to learn, little by little, that the forces of nature will work with him when he learns their laws and obeys those laws. The conflict between man's inner feeling that he is born to command and the outward appearance that all sorts of forces are working against him is what goads the race on toward the discovery of the means through which man's seeming adversaries may be transformed into friends.

There is no adversary but ignorance, no antagonist but human misconception of the various ways in which the Life Power presents itself to us through the medium of sensation. When we take our sensations at face value, we suppose ourselves to be competing with our fellowmen. When we permit ourselves to be deceived by appearances, we suppose that our neighbor's real interests may clash with ours. When we look at the outsides of things only, we believe ourselves to be separated from other persons, physically and psychically. Under the spell of this delusion we entertain the notion that the universe holds two sets of antagonistic causes. We believe there is a fight between Spirit and Matter, an age-long warfare between God and the Devil in which the Devil, so far, seems to have won most of the battles.

An aspirant to the Grade of Lesser Adept must overcome this dualism. He begins to do so by taking up the work of the Grade of Practicus. When he has learned by experiment that confident expectation really does form patterns that actually are realized as physical forms and conditions, he has taken a long step toward freedom. He sees then that he may be master of circumstances to the degree that he is skillful in making mental patterns. Thus, he learns that nothing fights against him but his own ignorance and clumsiness.

It requires little practice to gain this knowledge. Some years ago a young woman in Toronto attended a public lecture in which the underlying principle of mental imagery was explained.

"Don't attempt elaborate things at first," the lecturer said, "because small successes will build up your confidence for greater undertakings. Begin with something easy, say, a hat. Pick out just the kind of hat you want. Draw a picture of it, if you can. Write a description of it and specify the material, the color, the shape, the size, the price—all the details. Expect to have it. Stand before a mirror and see yourself wearing it. You will surely get it, if you follow this procedure."

The young woman was impressed. Later she joined a class for further instruction from the same teacher. One evening just before class time she rushed up to the teacher, exclaiming:

"I've got the hat!"

"What hat?"

"Why, *the* hat—the one you told us to picture. I'll wear it to class tomorrow night."

And she did. She found that hat in a little out-of-the-way shop. None of the milliners she usually patronized had anything like it. Neither did any of the big department stores. Yet she kept on visualizing, and one

day obeyed an impulse to turn down a street she was passing on her way home. Presently she found herself before a shabby little millinery shop. No such hat as she wanted was in the window. As she entered, nothing like it struck her eye. But when she asked if they had such a hat, the clerk opened a drawer and produced the exact duplicate of her mental image.

Their designer had finished it the day before. No such hat was in Toronto, or anywhere else, when she began to visualize. The milliner's hands did the cutting and sewing; but the visualizer really made that hat. The idea in her brain was executed through the activity of the milliner's body.

Note particularly that there was no coercion. The young woman did not try to influence some particular milliner to make such a hat. She simply created the mental pattern and kept it vividly in mind, in the mood of confident expectancy. The milliner found self-expression and self-satisfaction in making it. The shopkeeper's overhead was less than that of more expensive shops, so he made a fair profit on the transaction at the very price determined by the visualizer. All concerned shared in the benefit.

This one example is a whole lesson in the practical use of mental imagery. Such practice leads to the realization that the Life Power in us is really a "mediating influence," an adaptive, modifying force that can effect physical changes at a distance. The mind of man is creative; but its images must be confidently expected to materialize, in spite of all appearances to the contrary.

## THE TWENTY-FIFTH PATH

*The twenty-fifth path is called the Intelligence of Probation or Trial (or the Tentative Intelligence), and it is so called because it is the first test whereby the Creator tries the devout.*

*Book of Formation*

This path is the second path leading to the Grade of Lesser Adept. It begins in the Grade of Theoricus, because in this path one puts the fundamental occult theory to the test of actual trial. In Tarot this path is represented by Key 14, Temperance.

The Hebrew adjective translated "tentative" is NSIVNI, *nahsahyuni*, and its number, 186, is that of ABN NGP, *Ehben nawgaf*, "a stone of stumbling" (Is. 8:14); MVSP, *mosaph*, "an increase"; MMVNIM, *mamonim*, "chiefs, prefects"; MQVM, *mahkom* (a place on which something stands or exists, a location); and QVP, *Qoph*, the back of the head, which is the name of the letter assigned to the twenty-ninth path.

The first of these number correspondences (see the passage in Isaiah) refers to the One Identity itself, indicating that those who approach that Identity in the right spirit find it a sanctuary, a place of safety, whereas those who misinterpret their relation to it look upon it as the cause of all their troubles. The same thought is found in David's Song of Victory (2 Samuel 22:27,28), and in Psalm 18:26,27. The Psalm is a slightly different version of the song recorded in 2 Samuel.

Judge Troward has developed this point at some length in *The Edinburgh Lectures*. He says:

It becomes, therefore, the most important of all considerations with what character we invest the Universal Mind; for since our relation to it is *purely subjective* it will infallibly bear to us exactly that character which we impress upon it; in other words it will be to us exactly what we believe it to be.... This is the meaning of that remarkable passage in the Bible, "With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt show thyself froward," for the context makes it clear to us that these words are addressed to the Divine Being. The spiritual kingdom is *within* us, and as we realize it *there* so it becomes to us a reality.<sup>1</sup>

After we have overcome the fears and delusions represented by Key 15, we must do all that we can to deepen our realization that the One I AM is the real Actor and Knower in our personal lives. The angel in Key 14 represents that I AM.

The stumbling block to right thinking about this One Identity is to be sought in misinterpretations of sense experience. Until our senses are refined and their reports correctly correlated, they lead us to form wrong conclusions as to the nature of the governing powers of the world (MMVNIM, *mamonim*, "the prefects"). These wrong conclusions are usually misunderstandings of the real nature of the One Reality on which creation is established, and also of man's location or place in the cosmic order (MQVM, "place"). The cause of this misunderstanding is a defect in our own organization, which is not complete and so gives us only a partial experience of reality. This is the import of the correspondence of NSIVNI, the name of the twenty-fifth path, to QVP, *Qoph*, the letter name related to Corporeal Intelligence, or body consciousness. When we understand the Law of Growth or Evolution hinted at by the word MVSP, *mosaph*, meaning "increase," we begin to take our own evolution in hand and proceed step by

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Troward, *The Edinburgh Lectures on Mental Science* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1909), 99.

step along the path of liberation that leads to the perfection of the organism. Then we shall remedy our partial knowledge by our ability to make contact with the Universal Mind. This does not mean that we shall become omniscient ourselves, as persons. It does mean that we can bring the perfect knowledge of Omniscience itself to bear on any problem we may be called on to solve.

Understand that until the first test mentioned in the quotation from the *Book of Formation* has been passed, no other tests are given. There is a disposition among the romantically inclined to look on all their mishaps as "occult tests." Thus, the more miserable they are and the worse their circumstances, the more twisted satisfaction they derive from their foolish supposition that they are getting special attention from what they usually call "the Hierarchy." It is not at all uncommon to find this kind of inverted egotism.

The truth is that such conditions in our lives are always indications that we have failed in the first test. What that test is we learn from what Jesus said when he warned his disciples to be *doers* of the Word and not hearers only. In these days of many books, innumerable lectures, and classes, there is a temptation to rest content with the acquisition of esoteric information. Occult knowledge cannot be properly assimilated unless it is put into practice. We must live the life if we would know the doctrine.

It is not without significance that this twenty-fifth path is associated by Qabalists with the zodiacal sign Sagittarius, whose symbol is the arrow. We must aim at something and shoot at it. Even if we miss, we have done that much toward gaining the skill that will eventually enable us to make bull's-eyes every time. The most accurate instructions in archery will never make an archer. One must draw the bow and let fly the arrow.

This is the first test—the test of practical application. When things go wrong with us, it is because we are not aiming right. The power of increase is a rock of stumbling to us, because we have taken no steps to verify the fundamental doctrine of Ageless Wisdom, which is that every personal expression of the One Identity thinks, feels, speaks, and acts (consciously and subconsciously) through the operation of a single Life Power, which *flows through* the personal organism but does not originate therein.

The means by which the truth of this doctrine may be verified are perfectly simple and easy. Whatever difficulty there may seem to be arises from inertia and heedlessness. He who would become a Lesser Adept must be in dead earnest. He must consider the tremendous claims of the Invisible Order, as set forth in the *Fama* and the *Confessio* and in all other texts of Ageless Wisdom. If those claims be true, nothing can be more important than their verification. Nothing can be more worth one's utmost exertions than to find out for oneself that there is really available to every human being a power that he may so apply to the reconstruction of his personality that he may become a conscious instrument for the expression of the

limitless potency of Omnipotence itself, a conscious channel for the expression of the inexhaustible knowledge of Omniscience.

This being understood, the actual work is comparatively easy, though at first it requires alert attention and a great deal of patience. One has simply to remind oneself again and again of the overshadowing presence of the One Identity. Again and again he has to recall the truth that he does *nothing* of himself. Over and over he has to bring to mind the thought that the appearance that he is engaged in this or that personal activity is *merely* an appearance.

In time these repetitions will make a deep impression on subconsciousness. Thus, one will form the habit of being continually receptive to the influx of the Life Power. At first one simply acts *as if* this were so. He assumes that the doctrine just stated *may* be true. In so doing he follows the method of science, which conducts all its experiments in verification on similar assumptions. But since this particular assumption is really true, the line of conduct here indicated invariably leads to firsthand knowledge of that truth. Faithful practice of this method always brings about such changes in personality that one finds out for himself the accuracy of what he has been taught. From then on the path of practical occultism becomes one of thrilling adventure.

Note that the text says this test is given by the Creator. It is not given by persons. It is in the nature of things. It is as inevitable as any other natural law. Just as we may not use electricity unless all our endeavors to do so conform to its nature, so we may not become depositories of the power of God unless we put ourselves in a position to receive the influx of power from higher levels of being.

"The devout" means, of course, those who are devoted. It must not be understood in any narrow sense as designating those who are outwardly religious. The Hebrew word is *Chasidim*, and this is the technical designation of all practical Qabalists, hence of all true Rosicrucians. The word comes from the noun *ChSD*, *Chesed*, "Mercy" or "Benevolence." This is the name of the fourth circle on the Tree of Life. It is the Sphere of Jupiter, and astrologically Jupiter represents comprehension of natural law, expansiveness, and hence, good fortune. *Chesed*, moreover, is said to be the seat of the Measuring Intelligence. Thus, we perceive that one of the *Chasidim* is one who rightly measures his position in the cosmic order, perceives that human personality rests on the eternal foundation of the Limitless Light, and looks upon himself as a channel for inexhaustible benevolence. On this account the "word" R. C. becomes his mark and character.

We are exhorted to love our neighbor as ourselves, because the Self of one is the Self of all. We are told that pure and undefiled religion is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. This last statement has been sadly misunderstood by those who have taken it to mean that one must withdraw from all the usual vocations of human beings and shut oneself up in monastic

seclusion. What is meant is that we should not accept the half-knowledge of the worldly minded, that our measurements should be accurate and not mere rule-of-thumb. The emphasis, however, falls on the simple life of brotherliness, charity, and unstinted beneficence. This is really fundamental, and no amount of occult information is worth anything without it.

Since 1875 we have had in our midst abundant evidence of this. The Invisible Order, making one of its periodical endeavors to add to human knowledge of the Simple Way, established a society having for its first principle the recognition of human brotherhood and the practice of that principle. The few who understood the importance of this principle have had abundant evidence that all the other wonderful possibilities latent in human life may really be brought into manifestation. The many who were dazzled by phenomena and who sought to develop "powers," neglecting the first object of the society, became occult failures, as those responsible for the whole undertaking knew they would. Hence, the outer organization seems to have accomplished little and has split into many factions. Yet the inner movement has been a brilliant success, for through it enough persons have passed the "first test" to provide channels whereby the Invisible Order has been able to effect radical changes in the thought of the whole Western world.

He who would become a Lesser Adept, then, must devote himself to a life of giving. He must give freely of himself and of all of his possessions, spiritual and material. To be niggardly is to demonstrate one's want of comprehension. Thus, the Appendix to *The Sophic Hydrolith*, an alchemical text in *The Hermetic Museum*, warns us: "If, after obtaining this knowledge [of the Philosophers' Stone], you give way to pride or avarice (under the pretext of economy and prudence), and thus gradually turn away from God, the secret will most certainly fade out of your mind in a manner you do not understand. This has actually happened to many who would not be warned."<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, one must not be prodigal. Our giving must be measured according to the requirements of those to whom we give. Too much light is dazzling, and if we are giving knowledge, the gift must be so measured as to fit the capacity of the recipient. The same principle holds good in all our giving.

Yet must we always give freely and royally. Never must we withhold anything because we are afraid that our own supply may be exhausted. The measuring is not of what we have but rather of the manner in which what we give is distributed, so that it may be best employed. By such giving we enlarge our capacity to receive and increase our power to transmit. The more we give intelligently, the more are we able to receive. The one source of supply, remember, is absolutely inexhaustible.

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<sup>2</sup>Arthur Edward Waite, from "The Sophic Hydrolith" in *The Hermetic Museum* (reprinted in 1973 by Samuel Weiser, Inc., York Beach, ME), 117.

## THE TWENTY-FOURTH PATH

*The twenty-fourth path is called the Imaginative Intelligence. It is so called because it bears fruit in the patterns of the images of created beings.*

*Book of Formation.*

This path corresponds to Key 13 in Tarot. It is the last of the three paths leading to the Grade of Lesser Adept. It is the path attributed to the zodiacal sign Scorpio, and thus it has to do with the "secret force" utilized in practical occultism. For Scorpio, according to astrologers, rules the organs of generation, and Eliphas Levi tells us explicitly that the Great Magical Agent, whereby one who knows how to control and direct its currents may reduce the world to chaos and transform its face, is the instrument of life. He says: "God creates it eternally, and man, in the image of the Deity, modifies and apparently multiplies it in the reproduction of his species."

Similarly, in alchemical literature we find recurrent mention of the "seed of minerals." The Great Magical Agent is active in the generative organs of men and animals. It also governs the functions of flowers, the generative organs of plants, and here is another clue to the symbolism of the rose. The same force is active too in the processes by which cells reproduce themselves in our bodies.

Symbolists learn early in their studies that no occult emblems are so numerous as those that refer to reproduction. Shiva, the Hindu personification of transforming power, is represented by the image of a phallus. So was Osiris among the Egyptians. The serpent symbol means the same thing, and like the scorpion, it also corresponds to the eighth sign of the zodiac. The fish has precisely the same meaning, and that meaning was known to the early Christians and to the Gnostic sect called Ophites, who associated the Christos with the serpent.

Wherever Gnostic Christianity has penetrated, this identity of fish, serpent, and scorpion has been recognized. It is subtly woven into the doctrine of the *Fama* and the *Confessio*. These manifestoes give the age of Brother C. R. as 106 years, and 106 is the number of the letter name NVN, Nun. They speak of C. R. as being a reformer or transformer. They mention specifically the appearance of new stars in Serpentarius. Serpentarius, or Ophiucus as it is now called, is a constellation connected with the first decanate of the sign Scorpio. It is pictured as a man wrestling with a serpent and typifies that aspect of the Great Work that has to do with the transmutation of the reproductive force. The manifestoes say the Fraternity was established by eight persons, and they otherwise emphasize the magical number 8, which is the number of the sign Scorpio.

Persons who study symbolism without understanding its inner meaning are often horrified by the predominance of what they invariably term "sex symbols." Since the days of Godfrey Higgins, early in the

nineteenth century, books written by these exoteric symbolists have rung the changes on the theme that religion and occultism are "nothing but veiled sex." A prominent ebullition of this periodic expression of total misunderstanding is the Freudian school of psychoanalysis.

Let it be said, then, that though the magic force is certainly what operates in the reproduction of plants, animals, and men, neither true religion nor the true occultism that religion veils is in any sense sex magic. Whenever one comes upon some "very secret teaching" that whispers mysteriously about the sex function or hints that some occult use or modification of that function is the way to illumination and power, one may know that perversion and insanity are the fruits, and the only fruits, of the practices taught. There is much of this sort of thing in the world, but it usually may be recognized by its pretensions to great secrecy, or else by its expressed intention to interfere in some way with the normal life of human beings.

True Rosicrucian doctrine makes no mystery of this important matter. Nor does it encourage any practice that will weaken, pervert, or aim at direct modification of the sex function in human beings. It states boldly and openly that the power used in practical work is the force that reproduces physical forms. It insists on healthy bodies and on absolute cleanliness of thought concerning this whole matter. Having said that the power it employs is the power that peoples the world, the true esoteric doctrine points to the fact that there is evidently very much more of this force available than is required for this one purpose.

It utilizes this power by drawing it off from the particular nerve center that energizes the sex organs and applying it to other kinds of work. The methods that accomplish this result have nothing to do with perpetual celibacy, on the one hand, nor with the quest for "soul mates," on the other. In fact, there is nothing in practical work of this sort to encourage the notions current in some of the cults and sects composing the "lunatic fringe" of occultism.

The adjective *imaginative*, describing the twenty-fourth path, and the position of the path itself on the Tree of Life show by what means true Rosicrucians control the Great Magical Agent. Mastery of the currents of this nervous energy in the physical body is achieved by mental imagery, but the images employed have nothing whatever to do with the sex function. All magic is accomplished by the mind's power of generating mental images. Imagination directed toward the formation of specific patterns for desirable conditions is the secret of this twenty-fourth path.

The higher technique of these exercises in creative imagination has to do with building the pattern of the deathless "solar body," which is symbolized by the rising sun in the background of Key 13. Few persons know that such a body can be built. Fewer still are aware that some human beings actually have built such a vehicle. The race thought runs counter to this idea. We mistakenly suppose that everyone must die.

This is not true, and one of the principal undertakings of the Invisible Order is to sow this seed idea in the race mind as a counteractive to the natural man's belief in the reality of death. Thus, in the Third Degree of Craft Masonry one hears, after witnessing a drama centering around the death and raising of Hiram Abiff, that there is something in man that will never die.

Few members of the Craft have any conscious understanding of the tremendous implications of this Third Degree. Yet every time a Master Mason is raised, the whole story of the alchemical work of transmutation is rehearsed in compact form. Thus, all who attend such ceremonies have the seed idea impressed on them over and over again. They do not share the benefits of the truth so expressed unless they become consciously aware of its meaning; but they do further the purpose of the Invisible Order in another way, *for every person who sees these rites and hears the accompanying words is a channel through which the great truths behind the symbols enter the race subconsciousness.*

It is on this account that every ceremonial representation of these mysteries includes a portion in which the candidate is obliged to undergo a simulated death. He must be killed and then raised. Whether it be Osiris slain and risen, Hiram murdered and raised from the grave, or Brother C. R. receiving initiation after the death of P. A. L., the intimation is ever the same. And the purpose of all of these ceremonies, from the mysteries of Eleusis down to this day, is to send into the race mind the seed thought that man as an immortal may build himself a deathless vehicle, a body that shall never die.

If in our patterns of desirable action we include that of building such a body, in which the balance between integration and disintegration shall be preserved indefinitely, we have taken a step in the right direction. This is the first step in that control of the secret serpent force that has enabled others in the past and will enable some in this present generation to complete the Great Work from "this side" of life.

Recognition that this is a reasonable expectation comes first. Even if this recognition is not actualized in the lives of some of us, by our practice we shall have planted a seed in subconsciousness that will survive the death of the physical body and that may be developed during our sojourn on the "other side of the veil of death."

One who does this learns to face death with equanimity. He really faces it and studies it in order to see what purposes it serves in the cosmic order. He goes *through* death mentally and symbolically. And on the other side of death he finds life eternal.

With such preparation he may go on, for the Lesser Adept must be released from the fear of death and the hatred of death that prevents one from understanding and overcoming it. He must be free too from all belief in luck, chance, fate, or limitations imposed by environment. He must know by experiment that the Great Magical Agent is indeed "the strong force of all forces, overcoming every subtle, and penetrating every solid thing." He

must be free from egotism, because some of his labors will test his reliance on the All Power behind his personality. He must be willing to follow his path even to death and beyond, because none of the cringing compromises of the coward who preserves physical existence at all costs are possible for the person who has reached any degree of adeptship.

Yet the Grade we are now studying is that of the *Lesser* adeptship, because in it the aspirant trains himself in nothing but those things that give him skill in controlling his mental imagery. Throughout his work he knows that physically and psychically he is one with the other manifestations of the One Identity, whose particular center of expression for earth dwellers is the sun. A Lesser Adept accustoms himself to regard everything in his environment as being so much solidified sunlight. He sees all things and creatures as being special manifestations of the daystar's radiance. He perceives his own thoughts, words, and deeds as being inseparable from that one force. Thus, he comes in time to understand to the full the occult phrase "Light in extension" and the Master's admonition, "Let your light shine."

This does not mean that he sees no further. At this stage of his development, however, he pays particular attention to mental practices that substitute for the conception of "many-ness" held by most persons the fixed and permanent idea that all things and experiences are forms taken by the one radiant energy of the sun. The work of the Lesser Adept enables him to realize that the Great Work is indeed the "Operation of the Sun," as the *Emerald Tablet of Hermes* declares it to be. Thus, the Lesser Adept's practice results in a mental attitude that may be put thus: "One Reality, the same yesterday, today, and forever, enters my experience as the radiant energy of the sun. This is the real substance of my body and of all other things I know. It is the source of every mode of power, the origin of every force, known and unknown. It is also the source of whatever has been known in past ages, of all knowledge existing now, and of all knowledge destined to be brought to light in the future. For it is the *something* that takes form eternally in every manifestation of power and in every expression of knowledge."

Imagination is the direct application of this one power. It is the mental activity through which the will of intelligent beings acts directly on the Great Magical Agent. Just as the young woman actually made a hat by her mental imagery even though her idea expressed itself through the action of another person, so a Lesser Adept, working incessantly to perfect his skill, has experience after experience demonstrating that his mental pictures are molds or patterns that determine the physical forms taken by the One Force.

A Lesser Adept learns that the external world is like the screen in a cinema theater. The light is the universal Conscious Energy. The projection machine is the self-conscious mind. The lens is attention. The pictures on the film are the work of the Adept's imagination. What he sees with his mind's eye becomes actualized through the operation of nature's basic laws.

In his presence marvels take place, events occur that are inexplicable to the ordinary human being; but these are marvels of law, miracles of right adaptation, mighty works of his creative imagination.

A Lesser Adept, remember, employs no powers that are not used by all men. Every human being projects mental images on the screen of environment by the process outlined here. Most persons, however, make distorted images. Few have the least conception of the fact that they have this power. Their light shines dim. The lens of attention is poorly focused. The pictures are deformed and hideous. Thus, their experiences correspond to their want of skill in scientific imagination.

Hence, the work of the Lesser Adept is summed up in the statement: "In all things, great and small, I see the Beauty of the Divine Expression." To make this mental pattern as a suggestion to subconsciousness is to set in motion a whole train of subtle activities that result at last in actual perception of the order and beauty behind the surface appearances of this world. Because beauty and balance, symmetry and efficiency, loveliness and strength, are really inseparable, the cultivation of the eye for true beauty is the best possible way to make one's environment what he wants it to be.

The aspirant may lack technical training to do the actual work that will beautify his world. Yet his mental pattern, held steadily, will certainly realize itself through somebody's action if not through his own. Let anyone build up a definite, clear image of a beautiful world, and thousands of pairs of hands will set to work to give it physical shape and form.

In the Hebrew spelling of the aspect of Reality to which the Grade of Lesser Adept is attributed (THPARTh), the first letter is Tav, corresponding to Key 21 in Tarot and to the Administrative Intelligence. A Lesser Adept begins with the assumption that every man is a special manifestation of the powers of the whole universe—that a personal life is simply a particular expression of all the life there is. This is what is really meant when man is called *microcosm* or little cosmos. From this point of view, the life of any man, whether he knows it or not, is actually an administration of cosmic law.

No sooner is this assumption made with sufficient force to affect subconsciousness than what is suggested by the letter Peh and by Tarot Key 16 follows as a corollary. Since every man is an administrator of cosmic law, since every man's actions are special expressions in a particular time and place of the whole interplay of cosmic forces, then surely no man stands alone. The false philosophy of exoteric religion, the false proverbs of "common sense," and the false science that still dominate race thought assert that man does stand alone. Hence, the Lesser Adept must work assiduously to break down the delusion of separateness.

He identifies himself with the cosmic vision typified by Key 0, The Fool, and in so doing he accepts also the burden implied by the fact that this Key corresponds to the letter name *Aleph*, the Ox. A Lesser Adept comes to

perceive that those who really know are aware that they are carrying the burden of manifestation, that on them is laid *Legis Jugum*, the yoke of the law. True, the yoke is easy and the burden is light, but it is a real responsibility nevertheless. When you know that to you is entrusted a share in the Great Undertaking, life will have new meaning for you. When you know that through the personality labeled with your name, the Eternal Pilgrim journeys onward toward the Great Beyond, you will find in the least of your daily experiences something unsuspected by most children of earth.

This knowledge a Lesser Adept has in perfection. He knows himself as the personified Sun. That is to say, he knows that all his personal activities are really transformations and transmutations of consciousness, as well as of force. Thus, he understands why in Key 19, corresponding to the letter Resh, the sun has a human face.

On the other hand, he knows that human personality is the form through which the One Force that manifests physically as solar energy is destined to perfect the Great Work. Thus, he sees why the open sunflowers behind the wall turn toward the two children instead of to the sun above. The children and the sun are not diverse and separate entities. They are different aspects of the One Thing. So are the flowers, the wall, and everything else in the Key.

The human aspect of the One Thing is the master and administrator of the laws and forces of all the other aspects of that same Reality. Human consciousness is truly the Collective Intelligence, the synthesis of all forms of consciousness. It is something more than mere synthesis too, for human life is that aspect of the One Thing whereby all the wonderful adaptations are made. "So thou *hast* the glory of the whole world," says the *Emerald Tablet*, "therefore let all obscurity flee before thee."

## DOCTRINES OF THE GRADE

The Hebrew for "Intelligence of Mediating Influence," assigned to the sixth circle on the Tree of Life, is ShPO NBDL, *Shefah Nabadal*. Hence, there are ten doctrines in this Grade of Lesser Adept, derived from the ten different letters in the words ThPARTh, *Tiphareth*, and ShPO NBDL, *Shefah Nabadal*. The three words contain twelve letters, but since Tav and Peh each occur twice, the doctrines drawn from the letters are only ten. They are as follows:



## 1. THE WORLD

Key 21 (Th)

**The world every man lives in is the world he forms by his mental imagery. The better he images, the better the world. "Better" in this instance means "more truly agreeing with the fundamental imagery of the Universal Mind."**

All form is limitation of the infinite energy of the Life Power. The primary cause of such limitation is the image-making power of the Universal Mind. Every act of human imagination is really a particular expression through a personal center of this image-making power of the Universal Mind. Hence, human imagination is in kind, though not in degree, the same as the universal image-making power.

By schooling himself in the truth that all his personal activities are aspects of the cosmic process, a Lesser Adept overcomes the illusion of separateness that interferes with his personal transmission of the images of the Universal Mind.



## 2. THE TOWER

Key 16 (P)

**To image truly, one must first overthrow erroneous conceptions. The various forms of the error of separateness must be corrected. This practice leads to the perception that all activity within the range of personal experience is really a series of transformations of the One spiritual energy.**

A Lesser Adept refuses to think of any act of his as being separate from the activity of the One Life Power. By as many ingenious devices as he can think of, he trains himself to see that all that occurs within the range of his personal experience is a transformation of the single energy at work throughout the universe.



## 3. THE FOOL

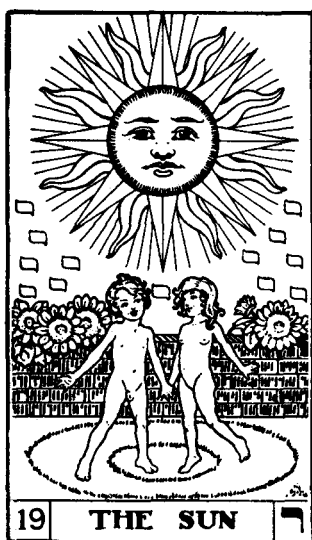
Key 0 (A)

The peak of present realization is the point of outlook from which we may perceive the vision of future possibility. Clear images of definite objectives are the seed ideas of future manifestations. Yet these must be seen as actual realities in the living present.

As the sixth circle on the Tree of Life is also related to the Life Breath, which is called *Ruach* in Hebrew, it is natural that the letter Aleph—the letter of The Fool—should be prominent in the name of this aspect of the Life Power. Aleph is the central letter in ThPARTh, *Tiphareth*, the heart of the word, so to speak, and to Aleph also is *Ruach* attri-

buted in Qabalah.

A Lesser Adept seeks always to clarify his vision of what lies beyond the heights of present human attainment. Again and again he reminds himself that Principle is not bound by precedent. He works with specific imagery in relation to his personal share in the cosmic process. In so doing he occupies his imagination almost exclusively with the work of picturing definite objectives, giving practically no thought at this stage to the consideration of ways and means.



## 4. THE SUN

Key 19 (R)

Since natural man is the seed of the spiritual Man, he who would scale the heights of adeptship must resolve to become more than man. The New World Order is an Order composed of new creatures, who constitute a new species of organic life.

In the Grade of Lesser Adept the idea of regeneration is emphasized. In one ritualistic version of the ceremonies of this Grade the aspirant takes this vow: "With the Divine permission, I will from this day forward apply myself unto the Great Work, which is so to purify and exalt my spiritual nature that with the Divine Aid I may at length attain to be more than human, and thus gradually raise and

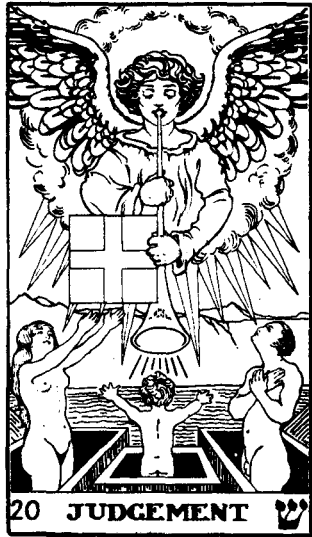
unite myself to my higher and divine Genius."

He aims to become a new creature, actually a new species of organism on this planet. He knows that others have done this and seeks to do it himself. He makes himself familiar with the attainments of the Brethren who have preceded him on this Way of Return, and he devotes himself to bringing about like changes in his own organism. This is the New Birth.

# 5. JUDGMENT Key 20 (Sh)

**The New Creature is newborn. He rises from the limitations of time and space into a higher dimension. He is changed from mortality into immortality. The New World Order is an order of immortals, and its nucleus is now manifest on this planet.**

This New Birth leads into a new life experience. This is dimly apprehended in modern exoteric teachings and speculations concerning the fourth dimension. It is even more clearly set forth in Oriental doctrines concerning the enlightenment that follows Yoga practice. Nobody can tell another what this experience is, but those who have enjoyed it are able to indicate the fact to each other by



means of various symbols. These symbols, however, will be meaningless to persons who have not had the illumination. Thus, in the Grade of Lesser Adept emphasis is placed on the fact that only by firsthand knowledge, going beyond the limits of human speculative philosophy resting on ordinary sensation, may enlightenment be gained. This experience includes conscious immortality. Thus, throughout the *Fama* and the *Confessio*, the anonymous writers address the readers as mortals, as if to intimate that the Brethren themselves are consciously immortal.



## 6. THE DEVIL Key 15 (O)

Every aspect of evil presenting itself to the human mind is the raw material for transmutation into a beautiful result. Behind all appearances, whatever they may be, is the operation of a perfect law having beauty for its foundation. Apparent evils are temporary and necessary phases of the Cosmic process.

If we see ugliness, it is because we do not see correctly. This does not mean that Rosicrucian doctrine denies the existence of relative evils. It does not mean that we should not do all we can to correct such evils. The Lesser Adept, however, instead of being frightened or paralyzed by appearances of evil, looks on them as necessary. He sees them as proceeding from the One Source, just as much as do those things that appear to be good. What he is taught and what he practices continually is the transmutation of apparent evils into evident goods by the operation of the power of mental imagery.



## 7. DEATH Key 13 (N)

He who is master of the force of dissolution is master of all changes of form. Disintegration is the opposite and complement of integration. Only he who can dissolve form may master the art of constituting forms.

A Lesser Adept, having passed through the path of the letter Nun on his way to this Grade, knows very well that the fact of physical death is inevitable, necessary, and beneficent. He knows why physical bodies die. He knows that the death of the physical body is not the end of personal existence. He knows that the experience of physical death is necessary until man learns how to build the kind of organism that will retain its form on the physical plane just as long as he wishes to use that form. The Lesser Adept knows too that the knowledge and skill required to do this include the knowledge and ability to disintegrate

the physical form instantly whenever it has served its purpose and to reintegrate it again whenever it may be required. He who can do this is master of death.



#### 8. THE MAGICIAN

Key 1 (B)

**Conscious transformation is an act of Self-consciousness. It is the use of mental imagery in the arrangement of patterns of form, by which forces are combined. The Self of man is master of all forms.**

This mastery is exercised from the vantage ground of self-consciousness represented in Tarot by Key 1. A Lesser Adept is a conscious transformer of his environment by means of mental imagery. He deliberately plans his constructions. He arranges the various combinations of forces that make up his surroundings. He does so as an instrument of a power higher than himself, for in the Grade of Lesser Adept he has not yet completely identified himself with that power.



#### 9. THE EMPRESS

Key 3 (D)

**Due skill in the mental direction of the Life Power as it flows from superconscious levels, through self-conscious levels, enables one to control, modify and altogether alter the mental images generated by subconsciousness. Self-consciousness is the point of control.**

In Qabalistic psychology the sixth circle on the Tree of Life is attributed to Imagination. Hence, it is natural to find a doctrine based on Key 3 and the letter Daleth receiving strong emphasis in this Grade. It will be remembered too that in ceremonies of this Grade the whole story of the finding of the Vault is rehearsed and dramatized, which

means that all the Venusian symbolism is brought into prominence. A Lesser Adept deliberately manipulates his mental imagery. By applying the law that subconsciousness is always amenable to suggestion, he finds out for himself that no person need be dominated by subconscious imagery. This is not a matter for argument; it is a matter for experiment. The greater number of us are victims of subconscious generation of mental imagery. A Lesser Adept learns to control the products of that generation and thus frees himself gradually from every kind of bondage.



10. JUSTICE  
Key 11 (L)

**Any modification of the mind may be overcome by exercising its opposite. This is the secret of mental equilibrium and emotional poise. Every evil may be overcome by its corresponding good.**

"Equilibrium is the basis of the Great Work." This ancient doctrine is reiterated in the Grade of Lesser Adept. He who is at work in this Grade never attempts to suppress a negative state of mind. Instead of this he uses intelligence to discover its positive opposite, and he cultivates the expression of that opposite state—the active expression, observe, not the passive contemplation of the opposite. Thus, the final work of a Lesser

Adept has to do with the establishment of poise and balance in his own consciousness, and the manifestation of his highest conceptions of justice in every detail of his personal conduct.

Beginning with the assumption that he is really an administrator of cosmic law (Th, Key 21), a Lesser Adept works at first for some time at uprooting and destroying various forms of the error of separateness (P, Key 16). By the exercise of imagination he cultivates vision and mentally identifies himself with the One Life Power (A, Key 0). This practice clears away various mental, emotional, and physical obstructions and produces in him the change termed *regeneration* (R, Key 19). Thus, he arrives at last at a point where what was at first an assumption becomes an actual experience. By repeated experiments he has demonstrated to himself that he is actually sharing in the government of the cosmos, that through him are playing the forces that really determine the forms assumed by his environment (Th). After having made this demonstration he is ready to proceed to the next Grade.